



SEPTEMBER 2023

La Crescent Community Bicycle Fleet

Standard Operating Procedures



**Growing from
River to Ridge**



Table of Contents

Introduction	1
About the Partners	2
Requesting & Reserving the Fleet	3
The Bicycle Fleet	5
The Bikes	6
Helmets & Helmet Use	7
Bicycle Maintenance	9
What to Do if a Bike is Broken	12
The Trailer	13
Loading and Unloading the Trailer	15-16
Using & Driving the Trailer	17
Security	18
Other Resources	20
Permission Slips	21
Bike Shops & Other Resources	22



Introduction

To help the students and families of La Crescent lead their best life, the city has acquired a bicycle fleet and trailer for teaching safe bicycling skills in the community. The fleet includes 24 bicycles that are stored in a trailer. Funding and technical assistance for the bicycle fleet and trailer were provided by the Minnesota Department of Transportation's Safe Routes to School program in the form of an Safe Routes to School (SRTS) Boost grant. PE Teachers, other school staff, and approved community partners who want to use the La Crescent Community Bicycle Fleet should have Walk! Bike! Fun! Curriculum Training or be supervised by someone who has. If you are not an approved community partner organization, please contact the Safe Routes to School Coordinator.



About The Partners

The La Crescent Bike Shoppe was established in 2009 by Active Living La Crescent funds. With the help of the City of La Crescent, we provide the community an opportunity to learn about bikes, obtain maintenance skills and increase the number of safe bikes on the streets. The La Crescent Community Bike Shoppe is a partner program of La Crescent Area healthy Community Partnership. All work and donations are tax deductible.

The La Crescent Community Bike Shoppe provides opportunities for the entire community to grow through bicycles. We accept all donated bikes, repair and refurbish what we can and resell gently used bikes. Our volunteers are available to help during shop hours and by appointment. We provide all types of bicycle services.

- Tune – ups
- Overhauls and custom work
- Minor adjustments like brakes and shifting
- Replace and repair tires and tubes

The Bike Shoppe is located at 227 Main St., across from the Post Office in the AcenTek building. Volunteers work Tuesday and Wednesday nights year round. We are also on the back parking lot at the trailhead of the Wagon Wheel Bridge on Saturday mornings, 9:00-noon, June-August.

Contact Linda Larson, Program Manager for more information at (608) 790-2580





Requesting and Reserving The Fleet

This bicycle fleet is meant to serve all of La Crescent—it's even in the name! That said, it's primary purpose is to teach bicycle safety and skills in La Crescent physical education classrooms for students in grades K-4. The fleet is typically scheduled for use in PE classrooms during September and October in the Fall, and April and May in the Spring. When it's not in use at La Crescent buildings, it can be used by approved community partners for educational programming.

Requesting Use of the Bicycle Fleet

Send an email to the La Crescent Safe Routes to School Coordinator with the following information:

- Name of group or organization
- Preferred dates (please indicate flexibility)
- Description of event/programming/activity
- Location of event/programming/activity
- Details about participants (quantity, age, etc.)
- Description of any training you've received in bicycle education

Prioritization of Users

Send an email to the La Crescent Safe Routes to School Coordinator with the following information:

1. La Crescent-Hokah Public Schools physical education
2. La Crescent-Hokah Community Education
3. Approved Community Partners
4. Non-approved Community Partners (must be approved to use)

Criteria

These criteria will be used to determine eligibility of requests to reserve the fleet:

1. Has your organization been approved to use the bicycle fleet in the past?
2. Is your event/programming/activity educational in nature?
3. Does your event/programming/activity serve youth in grades K-4?
4. Does your event/programming/activity take place in La Crescent?
5. Will your event/programming/activity take place on dates when the bicycle is not already scheduled?
6. Is your event/programming/activity a one day or one-off event? (Preference will be given to events/programming/activities that allow participants to build skills over multiple sessions.)
7. Has the primary adult coordinator received training in how to conduct bicycle education? (Preference will be given to Walk! Bike! Fun!-trained individuals and League Cycling Instructors.)
8. Does La Crescent have capacity to serve this request?



Requesting and Reserving The Fleet

Follow-Ups

Under most circumstances, the Safe Routes to School Coordinator will aim to respond to all requests within one week of submission. You may be asked to provide additional information, including:

- Acceptable dates of bicycle fleet use.
- Your event/programming/activity location.
- Intent to participate in a bicycle education training program, preferably Minnesota's Walk! Bike! Fun! curriculum or the national League Cycling Instructor certification program. This may need to be scheduled well in advance.

If You are Approved

Congratulations! You will need to:

- Read and agree to follow all policies and procedures outlined in the Standard Operating Procedures manual.
- Determine the exact location to park the trailer.
- Ensure that everyone who uses a bicycle (or, in the case of minors, their parents/ guardians) completes a liability waiver as determined by the user of the fleet.
- Plan for all bicycle users to wear a helmet, either one provided in the fleet or brought from home.
- Stay in close contact with the Safe Routes to School Coordinator.

In nearly all cases, the trailer will be moved by a member of the La Crescent Public Works department staff. Under no circumstances should the trailer be moved without permission and assistance from La Crescent Public Works department staff, which is why it is important to determine a suitable parking space before the trailer is delivered. Depending on availability, capacity, and the nature of the event, the La Crescent Safe Routes to School Coordinator may attend part or all of your programming. If you have any questions, please contact the La Crescent Safe Routes to School Coordinator.

The Bicycle Fleet



The Bikes

The La Crescent Community Bicycle Fleet includes different kinds of bikes that can meet the needs of many ages, ability levels, and educational contexts.

Traditional

The bulk of the La Crescent Community Bicycle Fleet are Fuji Rookie entry level bikes in one size. These are durable, inexpensive bikes suited to comfortable riding for most students. Our traditional bicycles have hand brakes, a small gearset, quick release seat clamps and wheels, and relaxed frame geometry. These bikes are appropriate for many types of riding, including on streets, in a gymnasium, or on gentle offroad trails.



The fleet includes 24 20" bicycles, which will be most comfortable for elementary school students.

Helmets and Helmet Use

The La Crescent Community Bicycle Fleet is outfitted with helmets of many sizes suitable for students. It is possible that individuals may require a helmet that is smaller or larger than those provided by the fleet. If a smaller or larger helmet is needed, please contact the Safe Routes to School Coordinator.

Helmets are required for all activities using the La Crescent Community Bicycle Fleet. La Crescent Public Schools, the Bike Shoppe and the City of La Crescent encourage students and adults to use helmets in their daily life. Proper helmet fitting and wearing will be covered in all bicycle education activities associated with the fleet.



Disinfectant spray is provided in the trailer supplies for application after a class or unit is complete. . Given some of the limitations noted above, it is acceptable for participants to bring a helmet of their own from home.

Fitting a Helmet

Helmets will only provide optimal safety if they fit and are adjusted properly. A brief helmet fitting demonstration should be given to all users of the bicycle fleet. The helmets included with the La Crescent Community Bicycle Fleet have two pieces to adjust: the chin strap and the headband. Helmets should be snug but not tight and rest horizontally on the head. For additional information on helmet fitting, visit walkbikefun.org.



Important!

Helmets serve a single purpose: protecting the head and brain of the wearer. They are only good for impact, so remember the phrase “crash equals trash.” If a student crashes and the helmet absorbs any of the impact of the fall, throw the helmet away and notify the Safe Routes to

School Coordinator. If the person who crashed requires medical attention, notify a school nurse or call 911 immediately, depending on severity of the injury

Bicycle Maintenance

All bicycles should be briefly checked for maintenance issues after each use. This can be a simple “ABC Quick Check.”

The ABC Quick Check asks the evaluator to remember these steps:



A is for Air

Check to make sure both tires are firm, not squishy. If the air quantity is low, fill inner tubes to appropriate PSI (pounds per square inch) as noted on the sidewall of the tire with the fleet’s air pump.

- 1. Test the air by squeezing both tires between you thumb and forefinger. Tires should be firm, not squishy. If air is needed, fill with pump but do not overfill.**

Bicycle Maintenance

B is for Brakes

Squeeze the brakes to ensure that they stop rotation of the tire. When squeezing, you should not be able to pull the brake lever all the way back to the handlebar grip. Ensure that the brake pad doesn't rub against the wheel or tire after you release the brake lever.

2. When you squeeze the break, you should be able to fit a finger between the brake lever and the handlebar. Release the brakes and ensure that the wheels still spin unobstructed.



C is for Crank (Chain and Cassette)

Can you pedal the bike? If you pedal the bike, does the chain rotate the back tire? Does the chain stay on the gears? Can you shift the gears without trouble?

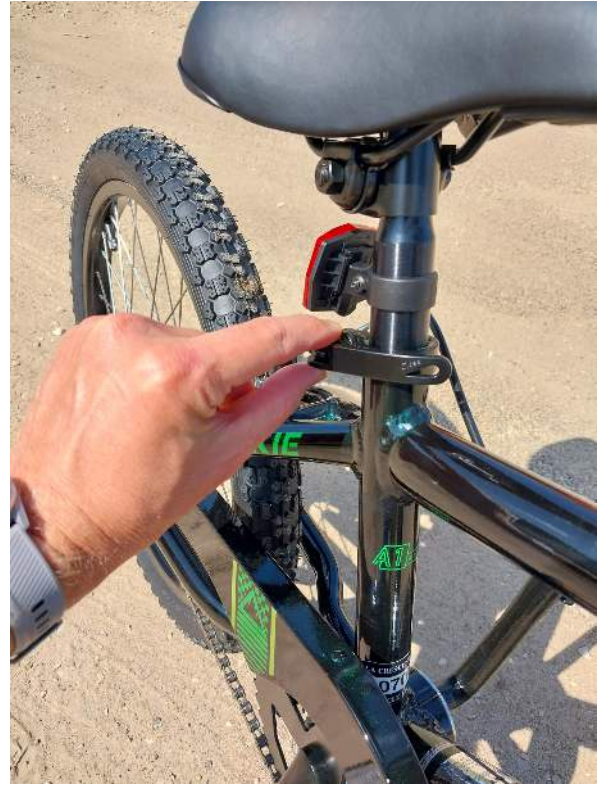
3. While standing beside the bike, lift the back by the seat or frame. Spin the pedals with your other hand. Try shifting in this way too (you will need to shift and then spin the pedals).

Bicycle Maintenance

Quick is for Quick Release

Make sure the quick release levers are snug against the frame of the bike. You should find these beneath the seat and where the wheels connect to the frame.

4. In the correct position, quick release levers should be “closed,” or close to the frame. When you close it, the lever should offer some resistance and leave a faint impression on your palm.



Check is for “Check It Out”

Take a couple of loops around the parking lot or gymnasium where you are hosting your event. Does everything else seem right with your bike? If so, you’re good to go!

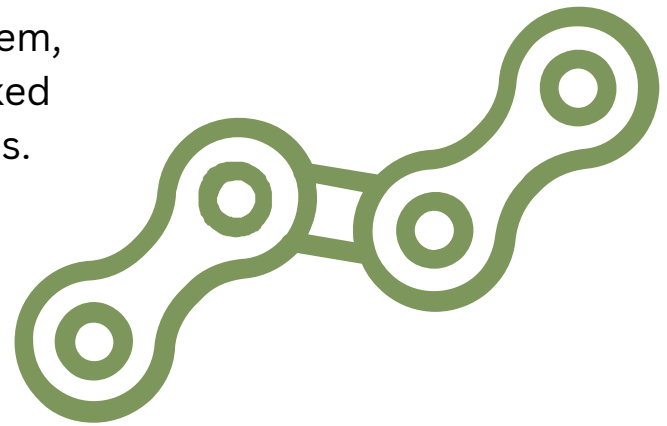
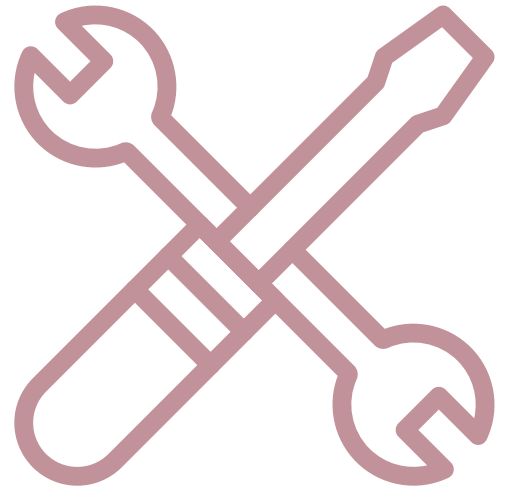
5. Take a spin! Test your brakes and shifters again, try turning and pedaling, and otherwise make sure everything looks, sounds, and feels normal.

What to do if a bicycle is broken

Nothing lasts forever, and that certainly includes bikes used by excited children. Here are three simple things that you should remember if you come across a bike that is broken or unsafe to ride.

- 1. Stop using the bike** - Set the bicycle aside or back in the van and don't use it for any reason.
- 2. Mark the bike** - Use a piece of tape, paper, or another recognizable material to mark which bike needs additional inspection.
- 3. Notify the SRTS Coordinator** - As soon as you can, let the SRTS Coordinator know that there is a problem with a bicycle, the nature of the problem, where the bicycle is located, and how you marked the bike to differentiate it from working bicycles. Email is preferred over phone calls.

This procedure applies to other equipment included in the fleet trailer as well.



Regular Maintenance!

The fleet bicycles should receive regular professional overhaul maintenance from a local bike shop every year, or as needed. (See the list of Other Resources on Page 29.) Bicycle frames should be cleaned with dish soap and water at the end of every school year.

The best way to avoid major damage to bicycles (and major expenses) is to regularly check for and address small maintenance issues as they arise.



The Trailer



The Trailer

All of the LCHPS bikes are stored and transported in a branded trailer. It is 24 feet long and eight feet wide. Inside, a vertical rack system allows us to store bicycles by hanging them from the two side walls. There is an area for extra storage at the nose of the trailer.

The trailer can be accessed by a full size rear drawbridge style door at the back and a standard size service door on the passenger side.



Other Supplies With Fleet

Air Pumps

Bike Tool Kit

Clipboard

Disinfectant Spray

Educational Materials

Scratch Paper

If any of these items are missing, please notify the Safe Routes to School Coordinator.

Unloading Bikes



Most of the bikes are secured in the trailer by hanging from a vertical wall rack. It's easy to load or unload bikes, especially if you approach the task in an organized, deliberate, patient manner.

Be Organized

Before you start rolling bikes out of the trailer, decide where you are going to stage them. Depending on your activity and the number of participants, you may need considerable space. (Bonus! Unloading time—before the activity starts—is a great opportunity to conduct AB Quick Checks. See pages 8-10 for details.)

Be Deliberate

Know the age of your participants; bicycles are stored primarily by type and understanding what kind of bikes you'll need will determine where to unload them from. See the trailer map on Page 16 to find the bikes you need before you even open the door.

Be Patient

The trailer can be fairly cramped when it is full of bikes. Move storage bins and bike equipment to prevent tripping. Remove bikes from hooks slowly and carefully to prevent damage to wheels, brake and shifter cables, and the racks themselves.

Loading Bikes

Be Organized

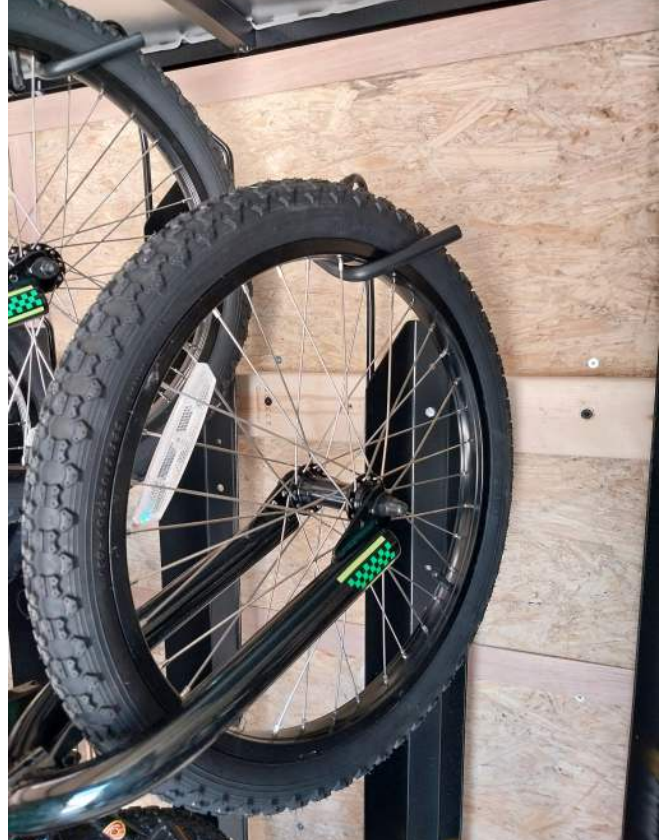
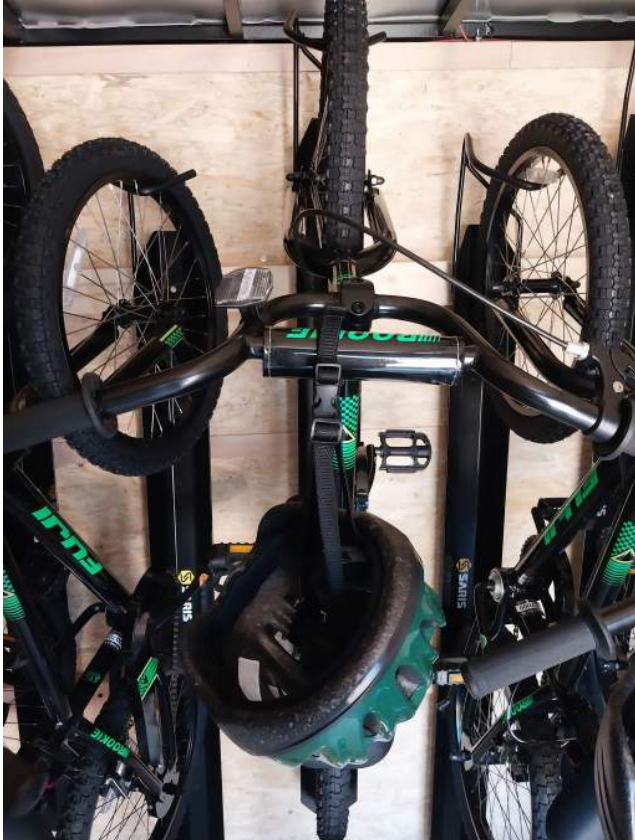
Before you start loading in, determine what bicycles have been removed and what part of the trailer they should end up in. Because space can be tight, make a plan for your order of operations.

Be Deliberate

Hanging up the bicycles can be a little tricky, so get a good grip on the bike at the handlebars/stem and the frame's seat tube. Roll the bicycle onto the back tire and position it close to its destination rack. Carefully lift the bike and position the rack's hook between spokes. (Try not to use the part of the wheel where the inner tube valve sticks out, the racks can pull on these and deflate the tire or rip the inner tube.)

Be Patient

While many hands may make for light work, it's worth limiting this job to just one person. Or, if most of the bikes need to be loaded, have only one person at each door. Additional helpers can be positioned outside, rolling bikes to the loader.



Using and Driving the Trailer

In general, no one other than a trained La Crescent Public Works department staff member should move the trailer. The La Crescent Public Works department Director may permit individuals from approved partner organizations to transport the trailer, provided they have received appropriate training and direction from the Director. The trailer can be accessed by a full-size rear drawbridge style door at the back and a standard size service door on the passenger side.



Minimum Specifications for Towing the Trailer

3/4 Ton Vehicle

Electric Brake Controller

2 5/16" Ball Hitch

Class 3 Hitch or Greater

In general, no one other than a trained La Crescent Public Works department staff member should move the trailer. The La Crescent Public Works department Director may permit individuals from approved partner organizations to transport the trailer, provided they have received appropriate training and direction from the Director.

Security

These tips will prevent theft and help ensure that La Crescent-Hokah Public Schools maintains a full bicycle fleet for many years.

Locking The Trailer

When the trailer is not being supervised, it should be locked at all times. There are two padlocks for the rear door and one padlock for the side service door. Make sure that the locks are fully engaged and the locking bars are fully latched. See the photos below for how to properly secure the locking bars.



1. Not even close!



2. Getting there...



3. Don't forget to close the lock.

Security

Securing the Hitch & Trailer

When the bicycle trailer is parked at a school or other location, the trailer hitch should be affixed with a lock. Codes for the hitch lock are controlled by the Safe Routes to School Coordinator. Additionally, the trailer should be blocked behind its wheels if parked on a grade. Blocks are inside the trailer.

Supervising the Bicycles

If bicycles are staged outside the trailer or in a school building, they should be supervised or in a secure location at all times. If you take out bicycles and do not need them all, return the extra bicycles to the trailer and lock it or move them to a secure location before leaving on a bike ride.

Storing the Bicycles Outside of the Trailer

If bicycles are stored outside of the trailer for the period of use, they should be kept in a room that can be locked when the bicycles are not in use.

Check the Quantity of Bicycles After Every Use

As a redundant loss prevention measure, count the number of bicycles in use before the activity and count them again afterward



Other Resources





Permission Slips

For PE classes, the educator should discuss whether or not students require a permission slip with their administrator/principal. The SRTS Coordinator can provide a sample permission slip upon request.



Other Resources - Contacts

Safe Routes to School Coordinator

Jason Ludwigson
jludwigson@cityoflacscent-mn.gov